Vol. VII. Numb. 51

THE OBSERVATOR.

The Obſervator *had no Deſign to damage St.* Bartholomew's *Hoſpital, by writing againſt the lewd Practices of* Bartholomew-*Fair. The Government of the City vindicated, for reducing that Fair to three Days. Diſſolution of Manners, the ready Way to introduce Popery and Slavery; therefore Sports, Paſtimes, and Interludes on Lord's-days, &c. have been countenanc'd by the* Rehearſer's *Party.*

From **Wednesday**, Auguſt 7. to **Saturday**, Auguſt 11. 1708.

Country-m. THE *Rehearſer* has chang'd his Ground again, Maſter.

Obſ. How, *Roger?*

Country-m. Inſtead of acting the Part of a Diſputant, Maſter, and anſwering your Arguments for the coercive Power of Parliaments over Tyrants, and for their joint Authority with our Princes in making of Laws, he is return'd to his old Office of Railing and Slandering.

Obſ. That's his proper Element, *Roger:* But what does he ſay?

Country-m. In his Paper of the 7th Inſtant, Maſter, he brings a heavy Charge againſt you, *viz.* 'That becauſe you don't love to ſee any Charity 'thrive, or well-diſpos'd of in the Hands of Church-'men; and becauſe the publick Service of the 'Church is regularly kept up, and duly attended 'in St. *Bartholomew*'s Pariſh, to the Grief of Heart 'of thoſe who envy the Honour and Proſperity of 'the Church, you have been provok'd to beſpatter 'the Governors of St. *Bartholomew*'s Hoſpital, who 'are Church-men, as Sollicitors for the Continu-'ance of the Abominations of *Bartholomew*-Fair, in 'order to diſcourage any from contributing farther 'towards the Hoſpital.

Obſ. I deſpiſe his impotent Malice, *Roger.* That's as great a Falſhood as ever was utter'd by any of his Country-men, who were hir'd, in King *Charles* the II's Time, to ſwear Papiſts out of a Plot, and Proteſtants into one. I am ſo far from being griev'd that publick Worſhip is regularly kept up in that Pariſh, that I wiſh the like in all the Pariſhes of the Kingdom; and that there were none of the *Rehearſer*'s Jacobite Conventicles in the Nation. I was ſo far from a Deſign to beſpatter the Governors, among whom, by the *Rehearſer*'s Leave, there are Diſſenters, as well as Church-men; or from diſcouraging any to contribute farther to the Hoſpital, that my Tenderneſs for that noble and uſeful Foundation, and for the Reputation of the Governors, made me uſe my Endeavours to diſſwade any of them from ſolliciting the Continuance of the Muſick-Booths, Drolls, Raffling, Gaming, *&c.* in the Fair, becauſe ſuch Abominations have, for ſo many Years, been committed on thoſe Occaſions, that People would be apt to think, that whoever pleaded for the Continuance of the Fair longer than three Days, according to the original Grant of it, were for giving a Handle to have thoſe Abominations ſtill continu'd, which might diſcourage well-diſpos'd Perſons from beſtowing their Charity upon the Hoſpital, if they heard, that any of the Governors pleaded for the Continuance of thoſe Things: And I was ſo far from deſigning any Damage to that charitable Foundation, that I enforc'd what I ſaid with this Argument, That the Continuance of thoſe wicked Practices was like to ſend them more Patients to be cur'd *gratis* of noiſome Diſtempers, than all the Profits accruing to them by the Fair would amount to, as may be ſeen by the *Obſervator* of the 30th of *June*, which the *Rehearſer* ſo maliciouſly perverts.

Country-m. I believe none but he, Maſter, or thoſe of his Kidney, would have put ſuch a perverſe Conſtruction upon your Words; for no Body of Senſe could think, that any Man, and much leſs ſuch worthy Perſons as are concern'd in the Government of the Hoſpital, would plead for the Lewdneſs that has been practis'd theſe 30 Years paſt at that Fair. But ſince Arguments were us'd in the Common Council for Plays and Diverſions, becauſe the *Greeks* and *Romans* had them; and ſince 'tis very well known, that ſome of the Inhabitants about *Smithfield*, Tenants to the Hoſpital, and others, were actually for having the Booths, *&c.* continu'd, on Pretence, that the Rents of the Hoſpital, *&c.* would otherwiſe fall, I thought it was a Kindneſs to the Governors, to expoſe the Weakneſs of ſuch Arguments, and to diſſwade them from endangering their own Reputation, by putting the Loſs of a little Profit to the Hoſpital, in the Ballance againſt the Loſs of ſo many Souls, as we have too good Reaſon to think have been ruin'd by the Abominations committed in that Fair, of which every Year has produc'd too viſible Preſumptions: For to ſay nothing of what has been done elſewhere, the open Lewdneſs practis'd in the Cloyſters, was a Diſgrace to Mankind. Whatever the *Rehearſer* may think, I can't tell; but Prayers within St. *Bartholomew*'s Church, and ſuch Helliſh Practices without it, at one and the ſame Time, were very inconſiſtent.

Obſ. That Article of the *Rehearſer*'s Charge againſt me, *Roger*, That I conceal'd the Propoſals of the Governors for a Reformation of thoſe Abuſes, and took the Honour of 'em to my ſelf, will appear to be notoriouſly falſe, if the Date of that *Obſervator* be compar'd with the Time of the Propoſal made by ſome of the Governors, for a Committee of the Common Council to regulate the Diverſions of the Fair; for it will thereby appear, that the *Obſervator* of the 30th of *June*, was printed before that Propoſal was made. At the ſame Time, the *Rehearſal*'s owning I made Propoſals of manly and inoffenſive Exerciſes and Diverſions, inſtead of the Shows, *&c.* is a direct Vindication of me from his malicious Charge, that I did as much as in me lay to obſtruct the pious and noble Charity of the Hoſpital; for had thoſe manly and inoffenſive Exerciſes been ſet up, inſtead of the Shows, the Hoſpital muſt have had the Advantage, and the Governors the Diſpoſal of it; and if, as he ſays, they made the ſame Propoſal that I did, it ſhews, that I was ſo far from being their Enemy, that I agreed with them. But thus his Paſſion and Malice makes him to contradict himſelf.

Country-m. The *Rehearſal*'s Charge, Maſter, is as heavy upon the Government of the City, as upon you; for according to him, the Governors of the Hoſpital earneſtly preſs'd a Reformation of thoſe Abuſes, and did not deſire the Continuance of the Fair upon any other Terms; yet we very well know, their Deſire was not granted; which ſatisfies me, that the Government of the City did not think the Expedient propos'd, could anſwer the End; otherwiſe they would not have refus'd it; and I hope no Man will believe, that the Government of the City is againſt ſupporting St. *Bartholomew*'s Hoſpital, becauſe they are for reſtraining the Fair to three Days.

Obſ. I am inform'd 'tis the Opinion of very good Lawyers,

Lawyers, *Roger*, that the City could grant it for no longer Time; for by their original Charter of 47 *Ed.* 3. the Grant is only for three Days, *viz.* The Eve of St. *Bartholomew*, that Day, and the Morrow after. Beſides, the *Rehearſer*'s Charge is againſt the very Governors of the Hoſpital; for every one knows, that the Aldermen are Governors of it; yet that honourable Court were againſt continuing the Fair any longer; and ſince, by the Incorporation of that Hoſpital, the Lord Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens of *London*, are made Governors of it, no Body can think, but they tender the Advantage of it as much as any temporary Governors can do. Aud I am inform'd by good Hands, that the Rents of the Houſes belonging to the Hoſpital, will ſcarce ſuffer any Diminution, or at leaſt but very little, by reducing the Fair to three Days. But be that how it will, no good Chriſtian will think the Loſs of Money, and the Loſs of Souls, of equal Importance.

Country-m. The Government of the City has found, by woful Experience, Maſter, that former Orders by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, for reſtraining the Abuſes of that Fair, ſignify'd little. Nor are they to wonder at it; for we find the Queen's Orders have not ſignify'd much, for reforming the Stage; and indeed we may as well talk of reſtraining Crows from eating Carrion, if they can come at it, as of reſtraining the abominable Practices of the Retainers to the Stage, and of ſuch a Concourſe of lewd Peop'e as would come to the Fair, on purpoſe to gratify their vile Inclinations, if the Booths, Raffling-Shops, and other Places of Gaming where they us'd to rendezvous, were ſtill allow'd for 14 Days.

Obſ. The *Rehearſal*'s Charge upon me, *Roger*, as if I had call'd the Biſhop Merry Andrew's Ordinary, is of a Piece with the Reſt. I did not mention a Biſhop in that Caſe; yet I can't but bluſh at the Ignorance of this pretended Advocate of the Church, who ſeems not to know ſo much of her Conſtitution yet, as that Ordinary is the proper Name for ſuch as have Juriſdiction in Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical. He may be inform'd of this, if he pleaſes to call at *Doctors-Commons*, where I think he ought to have been ſummon'd before his Ordinary ere now, for the Popiſh and Schiſmatical Principles he has publiſh'd in his *Rehearſal*, and elſewhere.

Country-m. His Reflexion upon you, Maſter, that Diſſenters put you upon writing about the Fair, I know to be a groſs Untruth; for the Gentlemen who gave me the Information of the Proceedings about the Fair, were every one of 'em Church-men; and, to my certain Knowledge, as zealous and conſtant Attenders upon the Worſhip of the Church of *England*, as thoſe who frequent St. *Bartholomew*'s, or any Church in Town.

Obſ. I ſhan't judge of the *Rehearſer*'s Motives for writing againſt the Order of the City, *Roger*; but I muſt needs ſay, that he acts in this, according to the old Practice of his Party: For in 1618. King *James* the I. publiſh'd a Declaration for Sports and Paſtimes on the Lord's-day, to gratify the Papiſts; and at the ſame Time, order'd the Biſhops to oblige the Puritans to conform, or to leave the Country. This Declaration was renew'd by King *Charles* the I. in 1634. and the Clergy were order'd to read it in their Churches, on Pain of Deprivation. *Laud*, and his Faction, to make Room for thoſe Sports and Paſtimes, forbad preaching oftner than once on Lord's-days. Interludes were ſet up at *Whitehall*, by the King's Authority, on the Evening of thoſe Days; and Mr. *Prin* was fin'd 5000 *l.* had his Ears cut off, was degraded in the Univerſity, diſabl'd to practiſe at the Bar, and impriſon'd ſeveral Years, for writing againſt Stage-Plays, tho' his Book was licens'd by the Chaplain of that excellent Perſon, Arch-biſhop *Abbot*. Beſides, *Roger*, you have often heard, that a Diſſolution of Manners makes Way for Popery and Slavery; and by Conſequence, is an effectual Method to bring in the Pretender, and a *French* Government, which would ſoon effect *an Accommodation betwixt the Church of* England, *and that of* France, *and put an End to the Diſpute about the Pope's Supremacy*, according to the laudable Propoſal of the *Rehearſal* in his *Regale and Pontificate*. 'Twas the Advice of Cardinal *Mazarine*, and others, to debauch our Morals, in order to make us ſuſceptible of Popery and Slavery; and how much *French*, and other State Miſſes, with our lewd Play-houſes, and the Shows of *Bartholomew*-Fair, contributed towards it, every one knows. This was always the Practice of ſuch as deſign'd to make People Slaves. *Herodotus* tells us, Lib. 40. that *Craſus* adviſ'd *Cyrus* to command his Subjects *to teach their Children to play on Muſick, to ſing, dance, and revel in Taverns; by which he would ſoon find, that Men would degenerate into Women, and never take up Arms againſt him.* Thoſe very Arguments, *Roger*, have been made uſe of in Defence of Stage-Plays. But wiſe Princes, tho' Heathens, have abhor'd thoſe Methods, as *Athenæus*, Lib. 4. tells us of *Anacharſus, That ſome Buffoons being once brought to his Table to promote Mirth, he was not at all mov'd with it; but he laugh'd heartily at the Sight of an Ape; becauſe, as he ſaid, that Creature was naturally ridiculous; but Man became ſo only by Art, and baſe Affectation.*

Country-m. I am very well ſatisfy'd, Maſter, that the *Rehearſer* has thrown a horrid Scandal upon our Church, by charging you to have writ againſt her, becauſe you were for putting down the Buffoons, Jack-Puddings, Merry-Andrews, the lewd Shows, Rowley-Powleys, and Raffling-Shops, *&c.* of *Bartholomew*-Fair. O rare Advocate of the Church!

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¶ Any Gentlemen, who have any thing to communicate to the Author of this Paper, are deſir'd to direct it to be left with H. Meere, at the Black-Fryar in Black-Fryars, for the Obſervator, Poſt pay'd. Where Advertiſements are taken in.

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